Panchayats in the country to progressively obtain the benefits of Information Technology in implementing e-Governance solutions with reference to identified services delivered at the Panchayat level. This is a new initiative. A few Panchayats in States have been implementing Pilots for e-Governance at the Panchayat level under initiatives of the States concerned. However, it is under the Central Plan that common standards and benchmarks will be developed so as to ensure the integrated application of Information Technology to further good governance at the Panchayat level.

Oil refinery in Rajasthan

*320. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Oil and Natural Gas Corporation has proposed to set up a 7.5 million tonne refinery at Kausaria in Barmer district of Rajasthan, with an investment of Rs. 7,967 crores, as a joint venture with its subsidiary, Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd., U.K. based Cairn Energy; and

(b) if so, the details thereof including its present status?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Based on oil discoveries made by the Cairn Energy consortium in Barmer district of Rajasthan, the Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC)/Mangalore Refinery Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL) have expressed interest in setting up a refinery with a capacity of 7.5 Million Metric Tonne per annum. Two other Oil Public Sector Undertakings, namely, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), have also expressed interest in setting up a well head refinery at the site in Rajasthan. These companies have approached Government to designate them as the Government nominee for purchase of crude oil under the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) for the block RJ-ON-90/1.

Any investment plan for such a refinery can only be firmed up after Government have disignated their nominee for purchase of crude oil under the PSC. This is expected to be decided shortly.